

University of Missouri System

Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs

Internal Guidance on Intercampus Cooperative Academic Programs

Within the University of Missouri System, academic programs cooperate in a variety of ways, including:

- I. **Cooperative Alliances and Initiatives** represent the most loosely coupled type of cooperation and include many projects handled informally (e.g., cooperative research and scholarship efforts, grant writing, etc.). Such alliances and initiatives are developed on a case-by-case basis.

- II. **Cooperative Curriculum** is characterized by (1) two or more campuses agreeing to collaborate on course development and delivery (e.g., nursing) or (2) two or more UM campuses making formal arrangements for students to take courses at another campus to fulfill requirements (pharmacy), or other arrangements. Course sharing imposes moderate levels of cooperation with general agreements in such areas as:
 - A. Residency
 1. Equivalency of shared courses are agreed to by participating campuses at the outset
 2. When possible, all courses fulfill residency requirements on all four campuses
 - B. Those sharing courses should work out credit issues in advance. One suggestion might be as follows:
 1. Student head count goes to teaching campus
 2. Student credit hours go to teaching campus
 - C. All fees are recovered by teaching campus

- III. **Board of Curators Designated Cooperative Degree Program** is an academic program designated by the Board of Curators as “cooperative.” The term “cooperative” is reserved for a program whereby two or more campuses of the University of Missouri System have entered into a formal agreement to work together cooperatively to develop, implement, support, and evaluate the program according to a memorandum of understanding.

Prior to seeking this designation, the cooperative program obtains the appropriate approvals from appropriate administrators (i.e., the academic dean, provost, chancellor) and faculty governance bodies (i.e., department or college-level faculty or department or college executive committees) at each participating campus. In seeking designation as a cooperative program, the interested parties must also present to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs a plan for cooperation that includes the elements outlined below. The Board of Curators, upon the recommendation by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, may then designate a program as “cooperative.” Typically, this is placed on the Board of Curators’ consent agenda.

Components of Formal Cooperative Degree Programs

- A. A vision for the cooperative program that speaks to the rationale for seeking designation as a cooperative program, including benefits to the state, campus, students, and faculty of the program.
- B. A memorandum of understanding (MOU), signed by the chief academic officer of each cooperating campus, outlining the following areas:
 1. Cooperative program goals.
 2. The program's organizational structure providing for decision-making relative to the program characteristics, including academic issues, dispute resolution, etc.
 3. A formal set of by-laws, a governing plan (e.g. agenda, committees,.) and regular face-to-face meetings and conference calls (i.e., at least quarterly recommended).
 4. A common set of requirements for admission, progression and graduation of students, including the criteria for students to identify their "home campus" (i.e., campus granting the degree).
 5. Assignment of program faculty and faculty reporting lines.
 6. A plan for use of distance technologies for instruction, advising, and meetings.
 7. Delineation of intellectual property issues relative to curriculum and scholarship.
 8. Portability of student assistantships, stipends and financial aid.
 9. Residency, fees, credit, and curriculum issues.
 - a. How all shared courses from the campuses are going to be considered.
Generally, the expectation would be that they would have equivalent status and fulfill residency requirements on each campus. Variations from this practice should be clearly outlined.
 - b. Campuses identify manner for recognition of graduate faculty status and how to designate doctoral faculty affiliated with the program. Mutual recognition is ideal, though other variations might be identified and articulated in advance.
 - c. A core curriculum that is clearly articulated. A common core among cooperating campuses would be ideal.
 - d. Division of programmatic income and expenses.
 - Determine specifically how student head count and SCH are to be allocated to the campus teaching a particular course.
 - Determine how fees are shared between teaching campus and the student's "home campus." The "80/20 rule" will serve as the rule-of-thumb, though other arrangements can be articulated (e.g., team teaching arrangements).
 - e. Identification of how credits for the degree(s) awarded are "counted" by the students' home campuses.
 10. Evaluation.
 1. The cooperative program should be reviewed or evaluated every 4-5 years in tandem with the individual program review on campus.
 2. The review should include evidence of annual efforts of cooperative research or scholarship (e.g., co-authored papers, articles, grants, etc).
 3. The cooperative program review serves as the decision point as to whether or not to continue the cooperative program, withdraw the cooperative designation and plan for separate programmatic status, or discontinuance of individual campus programs. The timeline for such withdrawal must be clearly stated in the MOU.